

Message Text

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S E C R E T TEHRAN 5167

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IR, KU, SA

SUBJECT: IRAN'S RELATIONS WITH KUWAIT AND SAUDI ARABIA

1. IRANIAN AMBASSADOR ZANDFARD WHO CURRENTLY IN TEHRAN ON CONSULTATIONS FROM KUWAIT, MET BRIEFLY WITH ME JULY 21 FOR TOUR D'HORIZON ON IRAN'S RELATIONS WITH GULF STATES. MOST OF DISCUSSION COVERED FAMILIAR GROUND BUT TWO POINTS HE MADE APPEAR WORTH REPORTING AS FOLLOWS:

A. ZANDFARD WAS DISTURBED OVER WHAT HE CONSIDERED TO BE IMPASSE REACHED BETWEEN IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA OVER GULF ISLANDS DURING FOREIGN MINISTER KHALATBARI'S RECENT VISIT TO JIDDA. ALONG WITH MANY OTHERS HE HAD ASSUMED THAT WHILE KING FAISAL WAS NOT HAPPY OVER IRANIAN SEIZURE OF ISLANDS, HE WAS PREPARED TO SOFT-PEDAL ISSUE. NOW THAT FAISAL HAS MADE SUCH A POINT OF GULF ISLANDS ZANDFARD IS CONCERNED THAT KUWAITIS AND OTHER GULF STATES WILL GET THE WORD AND IRAN MAY LOSE MUCH OF GROUND GAINED DURING LAST YEAR IN ESTABLISHING OR IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH GULF STATES. ZANDFARD SAID HE HAD NO IDEA WHY FAISAL HAD DECIDED TO FLOG THIS ISSUE AGAIN EXCEPT POSSIBLY BECAUSE HE APPARENTLY FELT HE HAD BEEN TRICKED BY SHAH. THIS HAD APPARENTLY RANKLED FOR SOME

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TIME AND FAISAL MAY HAVE DECIDED KHALATBARI'S VISIT WAS

SUITABLE OCCASION TO GIVE VENT TO HIS FEELINGS.

B. ZANDFARD INFORMED ME MOST CONFIDENTIALLY THAT RECORD OF MEETING BETWEEN KHALATBARI AND FAISAL WHICH HE HAD SEEN INCLUDED PROPOSAL BY FAISAL IN CONTEXT OF DISCUSSION OVER GULF ISLAND ISSUE THAT IF IRAN WERE PREAPRED TO SETTLE ISLAND ISSUE ON TERMS SATISFACTORY TO ARAB STATES, SAUDI ARABIA WOULD BE PREPARED TO GIVE UP ITS CLAIMS TO BURAIMI OASIS. ZANDFARD SAID THIS PROPOSAL HAD COME OUT OF BLUE AND KHALATBARI HAD NOT PICKED IT UP. HE PROFESSED IGNORANCE AS TO FAISAL'S MOTIVES OR SERIOUSNESS IN MAKING THIS PROPOSAL.

2. FOR KUWAIT: HAVING MENTIONED FAISAL'S PROPOSAL LINKING BURAIMI AND GULF ISLAND ISSUES TO ME, ZANDFARD APPARENTLY REGRETTED HE HAD DONE SO AND URGED ME TO TREAT THIS WITH UTMOST SECRECY. WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR NOT MENTIONING THIS TO ZANDFARD UNLESS HE REFERS TO IT. HECK

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